

# CORTLAND BREAKFAST ROTARY NEWS

*Together We Serve, Together We Make a Difference*

✳️ CORTLANDBREAKFASTROTARY.ORG

✳️ EDITED BY SOPHIE WELBURN



**President Terry Cahill**

**Front Desk:**

Matt Banazek  
Jim Dempsey

**Thought for the Day:**

Matt Banazek

**Raffle Winner:** Karen DeWitt

**Attendance:** 21  
**Zoom:** 0  
**Guests:**  
**Leanne Bair**  
**Frank Kelly**  
**Megan Crowe**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Anna McGraw Send-Off**

✳️ July 12, 2026

**Meals of Hope**

✳️ July 31  
& August 1, 2026

**Summer Picnic**

✳️ August 12, 2026

## “Embrace what you enjoy and who you are” Megan Crowe & Area 51



The Cortland Breakfast Rotary Club had the pleasure of welcoming Megan Crowe as guest speaker this week! Crowe introduced the story of her husband, Fran Crowe’s journey as a business owner that started from a “dream [he] had as a kid to successful reality.”

Fran harkens from Campbell, NY and grew up in a time when “being a nerd was considered a bad thing.” He was a reader, often getting in trouble for reading in class, and going to the bookstore was likened to a magical experience. Fran loved comics (“Amazing Spider-man 300” is his favorite), video games, and playing Dungeons & Dragons. Influenced by rumors that the role-playing game had demonic origins, Fran’s mother called a priest over to provide counseling! But Fran “always embraced being a nerd, geek, and fanboy,” and would get his chance to play a role in building a welcoming environment for others who shared similar passions.

It was during his time as a student at SUNY Cortland that Fran began to consider the possibility of opening up a store. By selling off much of his massive collection of comics, novels, Magic the Gathering cards, and other collectibles, as well as with some help from others, The Crowe’s Nest opened in the Clocktower building on Main Street in 1995. (continued on page 2)

**Area 51 continued...**



**Senator Lea Webb presented Area 51 with the NYS Empire Award last month.**

The store attracted a “diverse group of people who enjoy a wide variety of interests,” and came to be a place that meant a lot to the employees, customers, and friends connected to it.

Following the 2006 fire that destroyed the Clocktower building, Fran’s store (since renamed Area 51) changed locations, but by 2009 closed due to the economic downturn.

Fran struggled in the corporate world working for someone else, but it was there that he met Megan- at first the two did not see eye-to-eye, but with time learned how to work together and came to like each other. So much so, in fact, they married! Megan concedes that she’s “not an authentic nerd,” but is able to apply her skills in helping with general operations, marketing, and outreach for Area 51.

Around 2015, Fran was able to return his attention to selling on eBay, but within a few years the business outgrew his basement. He decided to venture back into the brick-and-mortar business world, and reopened Area 51 in the Corset Building in October 2022. It didn’t take long for them to even outgrow this space, and when Megan went to the Joann’s closing sale in hopes of getting a good deal on displays, she walked out with an opportunity to move into the Riverside Plaza.

The renovated space opened last November, and continues to be a hub for people to “Play, Collect, Connect.” Megan concluded by explaining how “even though it is just a business, it’s created an impact in the community.”



**Cindy Stoker (7/2)  
Jim Dempsey (7/3)**

**Anniversaries**  
Kathie O’Mara (7/1/1994)



**Meals of Hope**

**Set-up:**

**Friday July 31st (6-8pm)**

**Work day:**

**Saturday August 1st**

**Table Captains @ 8am**

**Packing volunteers @ 9am**

**Clean-up & transport @ 11am**

## Happy Dollars

**Karen DeWitt:** She and Jeremy Boylan's family saw Pino off to the airport, and she's arrived home in Spain safe. Still seeking a host family in the Cortland school district!

**Jeremy Boylan:** For Pino; it was the Boylan's first time hosting and it couldn't have gone better. It was a great, great experience, missing Pino already, and he encourages others to give it a try.

**Frank Kelly:** His family hosted exchange students in the past, still keep in touch with one; he's disappointed by the difficulty getting host families. The program has an exponential lasting impact and we need to find ways to recruit.

**Mark Helms:** Thank you to Dianne Higgins for work on the flower boxes at the sheriff's office, they look very nice.

**Mike Shafer:** Was glad to make it back in time from alumni weekend to see Sophie receive her Paul Harris award; he hosted a student from Germany who he ran into at the airport on his way home, tells the story that the student wondered what laws would be observed on the flight and whether he'd get to have a beer!

**Conrad Janke:** For Pino and her send-off party at Jeremy's last Saturday; went to a birthday party at Homer Hops.

**Steve Cinquanti:** Congratulations Sophie; thank you Dianne and Kathie for work setting up Paul Harris dinner.

**Don Richards:** For Sophie's Paul Harris recognition; thank you for Steve's work on the dinner.

**Terry Cahill:** Farewell to Pino; great work on the dinner.

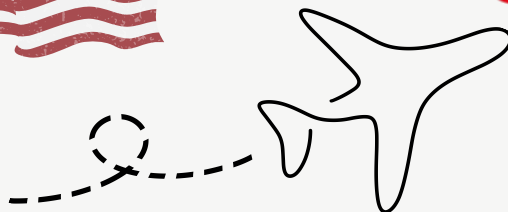
**Sophie Welburn:** Thank you for the Paul Harris recognition.

**Matt Banazek:** Thank you to all who contributed to the Paul Harris dinner; congrats Sophie; for Mark Roberts, past president, and Terry Cahill, new president; for Dianne Higgins and Steve Cinquanti for their work as secretary and treasurer, and for their replacements Laurie Comfort and Chrissie Allen.

### ***Mark Roberts presents the Rotary Scholarship to Desiree Hurd at the Seven Valleys New Tech Academy***



# ***Farewell Pino!***



**Cortland Enlarged City School District**  
1d · 🌐

Leanne Bair was selected as the Tony Mantella recipient for the CHS Athletic Booster Club.



**WELCOME NEW MEMBER**  
***Leanne Bair!***

**YOU'RE INVITED!**


**Summer Picnic**



**August 12th**

**5PM**


BOB'S BBQ PROVIDED BY DON & LUANNE...BRING A DISH TO PASS, YOUR BEVERAGE, AND A SWIMSUIT IF YOU WANT TO SWIM. COST IS \$10 PER PERSON. AT DON RICHARDS' 692 HATCHERS RUN, CORTLAND



**NOW TRAVELING** ✈️  
*CHS Class of 2026 to Switzerland*

**ANNA'S GRADUATION & SEND-OFF PARTY**

<b>LOCATION</b> 3492 DEERFIELD HEIGHTS CORTLAND, NY 13045	<b>DATE</b> SUNDAY JULY 12, 2026
<b>RSVP</b> 646-729-5727 OR EAK58@CORNELL.EDU	<b>TIME</b> 1:00 PM - 4:30 PM



CNY  
**Rotary**   
 DAY AT THE BALLPARK  
**SUNDAY, JULY 19TH**



**AKRON RUBBERDUCKS  
 (AA-GUARDIANS)**

VS



**SOUTHERN TIER  
 SCOOP SCOUNDRELS**

**FIRST PITCH 1:00 P.M. | GATES OPEN 12:00 P.M.**

**BARK IN THE PARK DAY  
 FEATURING AN APPEARANCE BY  
 MUTTS GONE NUTS DOG GROUP**



**TICKETS ARE \$9 PER PERSON  
 ANY ROTARY YOUTH  
 (PAST AND PRESENT) ARE FREE.**

**OUR**  
  
**CATCH ON  
 THE FIELD**  
 ENTER THROUGH LEFT FIELD  
 GATE, NEAR THE TARP  
**BACKYARD**

**KIDS EAT FREE  
 EVERY SUNDAY CHURCH**  
  
**KIDSEAT  
 FREE**  
 COMPLIMENTARY  
 HOT DOG & REGULAR SODA  
 (CHILDREN 3-12)

**HIGH FIVE CLUB  
 RUMBLE POOLIES**  
  
 Gallagher  
 Baker, PC  
**HIGH FIVE  
 CLUB**  
 EARN UP TO 20% OFF  
 IN THE TEAM STORE WHEN  
 YOU HIGH FIVE STAFF MEMBERS



**211 HENRY ST.  
 BINGHAMTON, NY 13901**